

R 032103Z AUG 01
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO ALL EAST ASIAN AND PACIFIC DIPLOMATIC POSTS
AIT TAIPEI 0000
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI//FPA//
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 134673

E.O. 12958: DECL: 7/31/11
TAGS: [CH](#) [PINR](#) [PGOV](#)
SUBJECT: CHINA/TIBET: HU CAN'T GO HOME AGAIN?
(01-17, 8/02/01)

NSC FOR PATTERSON, TIGHE, NSA FOR MINER, LONDON FOR HALL

THE FOLLOWING INR VIEWPOINT WAS WRITTEN BY AN ANALYST IN
THE OFFICE OF EAST ASIA AND PACIFIC ANALYSIS AND IS
PROVIDED FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND COMMENT.

(U) CLASSIFIED BY PAULA CAUSEY, OFFICE DIRECTOR INR/EAP.
REASON: 1.5 (D)

11. (C) SUMMARY. VICE PRESIDENT HU JINTAO'S JULY 17-23
VISIT TO TIBET WAS POLITICALLY SIGNIFICANT FOR AT LEAST
THREE REASONS: IT CONFIRMED CURRENT POLICY; IT ASSOCIATED
HU PERSONALLY WITH THE CURRENT RELATIVELY HARD-LINE
APPROACH; AND IT DEMONSTRATED HIS HEALTH AND VITALITY.

12. (C) VICE PRESIDENT HU JINTAO MADE A HIGHLY
PUBLICIZED TRIP TO TIBET IN MID-JULY TO COMMEMORATE
THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF TIBET'S "PEACEFUL LIBERATION,"
WHICH ACTUALLY TOOK PLACE IN MAY. SOME FOREIGN
TIBET WATCHERS HAVE SPECULATED THAT HIS TRIP WAS
DELAYED WHILE RENOVATIONS AND CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS
WERE BEING COMPLETED IN LHASA. WE HAVE NO EVIDENCE
TO SUGGEST THAT SECURITY CONCERNS MIGHT HAVE DELAYED
THE TRIP. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THE MASSIVE "NATIONAL
UNITY TRIPOD" WHICH HU UNVEILED MAY NOT HAVE BEEN
COMPLETED IN TIME, BUT THE MOST LIKELY EXPLANATION IS
THAT HIS TRIP WAS TIMED TO REINFORCE THE MESSAGE OF
THE FOURTH NATIONAL TIBET CONFERENCE IN JUNE.

13. (C) "PEACEFUL LIBERATION" OR "BLOOD AND TEARS"?
HU, IN A VARIETY OF INSPECTION TOURS, MEET-AND-
GREET OCCASIONS, AND PHOTO OPS, REITERATED
BEIJING'S POLICY LINE ARTICULATED AT THE CONFERENCE,
WHICH WAS ATTENDED BY ALL SEVEN POLITBURO STANDING
COMMITTEE MEMBERS. HIS KEYNOTE SPEECH AT THE LARGE-
SCALE LHASA COMMEMORATIVE RALLY UNDERScoreD TIBET'S
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVED LIVING STANDARDS.
IN THIS SPEECH AND IN AN ADDRESS TO OFFICIALS WORKING
IN TIBET, HU ALSO CALLED FOR STRONG EFFORTS TO
MAINTAIN STABILITY, SAYING TIBET WAS "A GEOGRAPHIC
BATTLEFRONT FOR FIGHTING AGAINST [ETHNIC] SEPARATISM."
HE DENOUNCED EFFORTS BY THE "DALAI CLIQUE" AND OTHER
"ANTI-CHINA FORCES" TO UNDERMINE STABILITY, A HARD
LINE DRAWN EVEN MORE CLEARLY BY A PUBLICIZED VISIT TO
PLA, PEOPLE'S ARMED POLICE, AND SECURITY POLICE TROOPS
IN TIBET.

14. (C) PRC POLICY WAS GRAPHICALLY SHOWN BY THE
PRESENTATION TO THE PLA GARRISON OF A SILK BANNER WITH
CONGRATULATORY CHARACTERS WRITTEN BY PRESIDENT JIANG AND
BY THE UNVEILING OF THE 3.5-TON, 15 METER-TALL "NATIONAL
UNITY TRIPOD," WHICH ALSO BEARS AN INSCRIPTION BY JIANG.
AN EXILE SPOKESMAN DENOUNCED THE TRIPOD--WHICH MAY HAVE
BEEN DESIGNED TO REMIND VIEWERS OF THE "GOLDEN URN"
WHICH BEIJING INSISTS MUST BE USED TO SELECT HIGH-
RANKING RELIGIOUS OFFICIALS--AS AN "INSULT TO TIBETANS."
THE SPOKESMAN DENOUNCED THE 50 YEARS OF CHINESE RULE AS
A TIME OF "BLOOD AND TEARS" AND SAID THE ANNIVERSARY WAS
NO CAUSE FOR CELEBRATION.

15. (C) ET HU, BRUTE? HU'S REMARKS PLACE HIM FIRMLY AND

UNEQUIVOCALLY BEHIND THE CENTRAL POLICIES ON TIBET. SOME OBSERVERS HOLD OUT HOPE THAT HU MIGHT HAVE MORE LIBERAL LEANINGS ON TIBETAN POLICY, HOPES FUELED BOTH BY HIS POPULIST APPROACH AS PARTY CHIEF OF POVERTY-STRICKEN GUIZHOU IN THE MID-1980S AND BY IMPRESSIONS HE CREATED BEFORE BEING ASSIGNED AS PARTY CHIEF IN TIBET IN 1988 AT THE HEIGHT OF ETHNIC UNREST IN THE REGION. SOME ALSO SAW IN HU'S LONG ABSENCES FROM TIBET DURING HIS TENURE AS PARTY CHIEF A SIGN THAT HE WAS NOT FULLY BEHIND THE HARD-LINE CRACKDOWN UNDERWAY AT THE TIME. HU MAY, IN FACT, HARBOR MORE LIBERAL LEANINGS, BUT HE GAVE NO HINT OF ANY DAYLIGHT BETWEEN HIMSELF AND OTHER CENTRAL LEADERS DURING THIS TRIP. TO DO SO, OF COURSE, WOULD ONLY SERVE TO UNDERCUT HIS CHANCES IN THE PARTY LEADERSHIP RESHUFFLE COMING IN THE FALL OF 2002.

¶6. (C) I'M FINE, REALLY... HU'S RETURN TO TIBET FOR A GRUELING WEEK-LONG VISIT MAY ALSO HAVE BEEN INTENDED TO SHOW THAT HIS HEALTH IS ROBUST. HIS LENGTHY ABSENCES FROM TIBET DURING HIS TENURE AS PARTY SECRETARY WERE WIDELY BLAMED ON AN INABILITY TO ACCLIMATIZE TO THE HIGH ALTITUDE AND RIGOROUS LIVING CONDITIONS IN THE REGION. BY NOT ONLY RETURNING TO LHASA, BUT TRAVELING TO SHIGATSE AND MAKING NUMEROUS INSPECTION VISITS, THE 59-YEAR-OLD HU PROBABLY HOPED TO DEMONSTRATE THAT NO CONCERNS ABOUT HIS HEALTH SHOULD STAND IN THE WAY OF HIS SUCCEEDING JIANG AS PARTY CHIEF AND/OR PRESIDENT.

(CCLARKE) (CONFIDENTIAL)

POWELL